

# Rachmaninoff's Playing Superb

Stock Pavilion Packed for  
Recital; Interpretations  
Perfect

By ELIOT GILMORE

Undoubtedly one of the greatest pianists of whom we have any record, Sergei Rachmaninoff, played for the first time in Madison Monday night to an audience that packed the university stock pavilion. It was a wonderful concert, and we hope with the rest who were there that the Wisconsin Union will bring him back again and again.

How enjoyable, even blissful, it is to feel the message of the great composers—Schubert, Brahms, Chopin, Liszt—when technique can be forgotten! Rachmaninoff's technique is perfect, his attack, peculiarly his own, is virile and true, and his tones are always round and beautiful. But his interpretations, his story-telling, if you will, are what give one the greatest pleasure. Even in Chopin's "Rondo, Op. 16," there seemed to hide a little fable.

The program opened with "An-

dantino and Variations" by Schubert and Tausig. Tone color, brilliance, and unsounded depths of vigor were outstanding. Then came the fantasia from the "Wanderer" by Schubert and Liszt. Only those who have heard this pianist play it can appreciate its power and the heights to which it reaches.

Skipping Brahms and Chopin, every number a jewel in its own setting, two fairy-tales by Medtner revealed Rachmaninoff as versatile, sympathetic, and very human. Both were told with a straightforward simplicity that bespoke an understanding mind.

To hear Rachmaninoff play his famous Prelude in C sharp minor is to hear the bells of Moscow interpreted on the pianoforte with such perfection and treatment as to make one gasp. We have heard the Prelude many time—someone has even written a jazz number from it!—yet Rachmaninoff alone knows what the composition means, and only he can send forth its message.

It is customary to end concerts with the biggest numbers, and Rachmaninoff used Liszt's "Rakoczy March", one of the most difficult pieces for concert work. It was done perfectly, and not for show purposes; there is a rhythm to this particular march that one must catch, and only a pianist who can forget his audience for the moment can maintain it.

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